

Message Text

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FOR CART-R FROM PA

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OVI, (VANCE), SOPN

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL TUESDAY
MAY 31 HEADED "A PLAUSIBLE APPROACH TO ARMS CONTROL."

2. ARMS CONTROL TALKS WITH THE RUSSIANS APPEAR TO BE BACK
ON THE TRACK AFTER THE DERAILEMENT IN MOSCOW LAST MARCH, BUT
THEY ARE NOT YET RUNNING SMOOTHLY OR ON SCHEDULE. THAT IS
THE MESSAGE WE DRAW FROM REPORTS OF THE LATEST ROUND IN GE-
NEVA, INCLUDING PRESIDENT CARTER'S ASSESSMENTS. MORE GOOD
MANNERS AND FLEXIBILITY WILL BE NEEDED ON BOTH SIDES IF THE
SALT II TREATY IS TO BE READY TO SUPPLANT EXPIRING PORTIONS
OF SALT I IN OCTOBER.

3. THE NEXT AGREEMENT IS TO RUN UNTIL 1985, AND IT WAS
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DECIDED THREE YEARS AGO THAT IT WOULD CAP THE ARMS RACE WITH
RELATIVELY HIGH WEAPONS CEILINGS: A LIMIT OF 2,400 STRATE-
GIC MISSILES AND BOMBERS FOR EACH SIDE, OF WHICH 1,320
MISSILES COULD BE ARMED WITH MULTIPLE WARHEADS. THIS
WAS THE DEAL AT VLADIVOSTOK, BUT WORRIES HAVE ARISEN ON BOTH
SIDES SINCE THEN. THE RUSSIANS HAVE GROWN PROGRESSIVELY
ANXIOUS ABOUT THE AMERICAN CRUISE MISSILE, A SMALL, CHEAP,

HIGHLY ACCURATE, PILOTLESS BOMBER THAT IS BEING DEVELOPED FOR LONG-RANGE STRATEGIC NUCLEAR ATTACK AS WELL AS SHORTER-RANGE TACTICAL USES. THE UNITED STATES HAS BEEN CONCERNED ABOUT THE NEW SOVIET BACKFIRE BOMBER AND, MORE RECENTLY, ABOUT THE NUMBER OF LARGE AND HEAVY MISSILES IN THE PROJECTED SOVIET MIX, WHICH COULD THREATEN OUR LAND-BASED RETALIATORY FORCE.

4. IN MARCH, PRESIDENT CARTER PROPOSED TWO ALTERNATIVE PATHS TO AGREEMENT: STICK WITH THE VLADIVOSTOK LIMITS, SOMEWHAT REDUCED, BUT DEFER THE CRUISES AND BACKFIRES TO THE NEXT ROUND; OR, NEGOTIATE A SUBSTANTIAL REDUCTION IN TOTAL MISSILES, WITH LIMITS ON THE WEAPONS MOST WORRISOME TO THE UNITED STATES BUT NONE OF SIGNIFICANCE ON THE CRUISE MISSILES THAT WORRY THE RUSSIANS. MOSCOW REJECTED BOTH ALTERNATIVES, PROPOSING VLADIVOSTOK PLUS A CRUISE DEAL INSTEAD.

5. TO BREAK THE IMPASSE, SECRETARY VANCE WENT TO GENEVA LAST WEEK WITH A THREE-PART PACKAGE: THE VLADIVOSTOK LIMITS, SOMEWHAT REDUCED, FOR THE ORIGINAL PERIOD OF EIGHT YEARS; A DETAILED PLEDGE TO REDUCE THESE LIMITS SUBSTANTIALLY IN NEGOTIATIONS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE PRESENT ONES; AND AN INTERIM DEAL OF TWO OR THREE YEARS TO PLACE SOME RESTRICTION ON CRUISES, BACKFIRES AND HEAVY SOVIET MISSILES TO GAIN TIME FOR A MORE RELIABLE DEAL ON THEM BY 1980.

6. THIS APPEARS TO BE A SENSIBLE APPROACH AND THE RUSS-
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SIANS APPARENTLY RECOGNIZE IT AS SUCH. NOW COMES THE QUESTION OF HOW SERIOUSLY TO RETARD DEVELOPMENT OF THE CRUISE AND WHAT TO DEMAND IN RETURN.

7. THERE IS DIFFICULTY AND DANGER IN THE FACT THAT THE CRUISE MISSILES, WHICH ARE STILL ONLY BARGAINING CHIPS, COULD BE WELL ON THEIR WAY TO DEPLOYMENT BY 1980. SOME AIR FORCE STUDIES, FOR INSTANCE, SHOW THAT 11,000 OF THEM COULD BE HUNG ON AMERICAN BOMBERS; THAT NUMBER WOULD OBVIOUSLY DWARF THE ALREADY NEGOTIATED MISSILE LIMITS. THERE ARE ALSO LAND-BASED VERSIONS, WHICH COULD THREATEN THE SOVIET HOMELAND FROM EUROPE, AND SEA-LAUNCHED VERSIONS THAT COULD TURN MANY SHIPS AND ATTACK SUBMARINES INTO LONG-RANGE STRATEGIC FORCES. ONCE DEPLOYED, THE CRUISES WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO COUNT; CONVENTIONAL OR SHORT-RANGE CRUISES WILL BE ALMOST INDISTINGUISHABLE FROM THE LONG-RANGE KIND.

8. WHAT MR. VANCE APPEARS TO HAVE OFFERED IS A SLOWDOWN

IN DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAND AND SEA VERSIONS, BUT NOT THE AIRBORNE VARIETY. WE SUSPECT THAT BEFORE THE RUSSIANS WILL AGREE TO THIS FORMULA, THE NAVY MAY HAVE TO GIVE UP THE TORPEDO-LAUNCHED CRUISE ALTOGETHER AND LAND-BASED CRUISES WILL HAVE TO BE CONFINED TO SHORT-RANGE MODELS. IF DEVELOPMENT OF AIRBORNE CRUISES IS NOT TO BE SLOWED DOWN, THERE UNDOUBTEDLY WILL HAVE TO BE A COMMITMENT TO COUNT THE BOMBERS THAT CARRY THEM, WITHIN THE VLADIVOS-TOK LIMITS ON MIRV MISSILES. IN RETURN, THE RUSSIANS WILL HAVE TO ACCEPT LIMITS ON THE BACKFIRE BOMBER AND ON THEIR HEAVY MISSILES BETWEEN NOW AND 1980 SO AS NOT TO FORECLOSE A SALT II ACCORD ON THEM.

9. THE ADMINISTRATION'S DEVELOPING APPROACH SEEMS REALISTIC AND PLAUSIBLE. A FEW FURTHER DELAYS ON THE CRUISE MISSILE SHOULD BE SEEN NOT SO MUCH AS CONCESSIONS TO THE RUSSIANS AS NECESSARY DUES FOR THE FAR-REACHING DEALS
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THAT MAY BE MADE IN THE TIME THUS GAINED. THE COST OF FAILURE WOULD MAKE THESE MODEST RESTRAINTS PALE IN SIGNIFICANCE. (END TEXT) CHRISTOPHER

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